

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE MIDLAND CITY HOUSING COMMISSION
MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2014, 3:00 P.M.
333 W. ELLSWORTH STREET
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS OVERFLOW ROOM
MIDLAND, MICHIGAN

1. Roll Call

PRESENT: Bob Burgess, Sharon Mortensen, Bill Garchow and Rob Wright

ABSENT: Rick Loose

OTHERS Brad Kaye, Director of Planning and Community Development; Grant Murschel, Community
PRESENT: Development Planner; Candy Balis, Manager of Washington Woods Senior Living
Community and Kim Samborn, Manager of Riverside Place Senior Living Community.

2. Approval of Minutes

a.) Special Meeting – February 10, 2014

Motioned by Garchow and seconded by Wright to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 10, 2014, as presented. Motion passed unanimously (4-0).

3. Public Comments

None

4. Reports

a.) Senior Housing Update

Samborn presented the quarterly report for Riverside Place Senior Living Community. She explained that during this winter season, walk-thrus and other inquiries have been slow but she suspects that it will pick up in the coming weeks. Already in the last few weeks, more walk-thrus have taken place. Additionally, snow removal has been a great effort of maintenance staff this winter and health service programs have expanded with the inclusion of Zumba.

Balis explained that Washington Woods Senior Living Community is at 96% occupancy. She expects that with warmer weather and spring returning, more tours will be conducted and applicants will move in. She reported that there have not been any major slip and fall incidents at the facility this winter which she credits to the diligence and hard work of the maintenance staff. Also, no major illness outbreaks have occurred during the current cold and flu season.

Balis announced her retirement to the Commission. She thanked them for all of their support of the years. The Commission commended Balis on her efforts and substantial work that she completed during her time at Washington Woods.

Chairman Loose joined the meeting at 3:11pm.

5. New Business

a.) Community Development Block Grant 2014-15 Budget

Murschel gave a quick overview of the budget proposed by staff. He explained that all of the requests for funding are proposed to be funded in full. Additionally, he explained the reasons for the proposed continuation of the Shelterhouse-Fence and Erosion Control project regarding the delay in the environmental review process.

Murschel outlined a recent pattern of Midland Area Homes not utilizing awarded funds and explained that he is interested in the opinion of the Commission regarding this matter. He explained that MAH didn't spend any of their awarded funds during the 2012-13 program year and have not yet spent any of their awarded funds during the current program year. Murschel acknowledged that the current year's delays in funding awards through the fall and the ongoing winter weather have made it difficult to do exterior home repairs during the current funding cycle.

Mortensen explained that she finds this pattern that MAH is on to be disconcerting. She suggested that staff have a frank conversation with the organization's director to inform her that the money needs to be spent when it is awarded or future requests would not likely be considered. Garchow agreed that MAH should understand that the money is "use it or lose it." Kaye explained that he and Murschel will organize a meeting with MAH's director to see why this is occurring and convey the importance of utilizing awarded funding.

Garchow explained how he is glad that all of the requests can be funded and that all are sound projects. This was echoed by Mortensen. Additionally, the Commission was glad that the categories subject to a cap were not being exceeded and subsequently no requests needed to be reduced.

Motioned by Mortensen and seconded by Wright to recommend to City Council the approval of the 2014-15 Community Development Block Grant Budget as presented in the staff report dated February 26, 2014. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0).

6. Communications

Murschel asked for feedback regarding the presentations that were given during the previous meeting by funding applicants. Garchow explained that he appreciated the uniformity of the presentations across the board. Mortensen enjoyed the standard questions that were given to the applicants in order for them to prepare. She would suggest that next year the presenters should be directed to arrive a half hour before their scheduled time in order to avoid delays and waiting for the presenters to arrive.

Burgess asked about the status of the Building Trades project for next year. Murschel and Kaye explained that next year's home is in need of a buyer as there is no partnership in place at this time with an area foundation or organization. Mortensen suggested that staff contact Disability Network to see if they might be interested in purchasing the home for their clients. Kaye explained that staff has been thinking of other options. One option that could be considered is a partnership with Habitat for Humanity. Kaye explained that this would produce a simpler home but is an option worth investigating further.

Kaye also updated the Commission on other business the Planning Department is working on. He explained that the last remaining home on Towsley Street was approved by Council to be purchased. The City will demolish both structures on the site as they are within the floodway of the Chippewa and Tittabawassee Rivers. Additionally, the City is in the process of obtaining a FEMA grant to acquire and demolish the 4D property near the Poseyville Road Bridge. The property will then be restored to a natural state. Lastly, the first tenants of the East End building will reportedly be moving in within a month to six weeks. Once all of the spaces are occupied, the downtown workforce will be approximately double what it is currently.

7. Future Meeting Date

a) June 2, 2014

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Grant Murschel", written in a cursive style.

Grant Murschel, Community Development Planner

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